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INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Poland

REPORT

SUBJECT City of Gniezno Gniezno Lake Area

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Town of GnieznoHistorical Background

1. "Gniezno is one of the oldest towns in Poland where, according to historical data, the first Polish Prince, Lech, laid the framework for the Polish state in the sixth century. Thereafter, up to the eleventh century, Gniezno was the seat of

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the Polish princes and later kings, and in the tenth century, at the time of christening of the Polish people, the first bishop seat was established in Gniezno. Since that time the town has been the seat of the Catholic Primate.

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2. ☐ On account of this historical background, Gniezno has remained in modern times a place of tradition and historic remembrance with inhabitants inclining toward conservatism and strong Catholic feelings.

Industry-Strategic Fortification

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3. ☐ Regarding industry, Gniezno plays a rather secondary role although there are some enterprises in the town's outskirts. Regarding military importance, Gniezno, which was formerly a fort, was returned to its important role as a strategic fort before World War I as it was located in the middle of a lake area on the frontier between the USSR and Germany. Before World War I, the German authorities constructed in this area quite a strong fortification system with Gniezno as the strategic center of this system. In the town itself, two large barracks were constructed which after World War I--when the area was no more in the frontier belt but rather in the central territory of Poland--remained a garrison for the infantry and cavalry units.

Race Horse Breeding

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4. ☐ Among other rather important objects within the town, race horse breeding is to be mentioned. This business existed before World War I and is one of the largest enterprises of this type in present Poland.

Institute for Mental Disorders

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5. ☐ Another remarkable large institute in Gniezno is the extensive institute for the treatment of mental disorders located in the western outskirts of the town.

Population

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6. ☐ The population of Gniezno is slightly over 20,000 inhabitants.

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The Gniezno Lake Area

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8. The area east of Gniezno is densely covered with lakes. Before World War I, when this district was on the then frontier between the USSR and Germany, the area was fortified. However, this outmoded fortification did not play any role during the last war [World War II] and in 1945 the Soviet offensive rolled past these fortification installations over the whole terrain leaving it almost without any war damages.

Inhabitants

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9. During World War II, the German occupation authorities expelled a number of Polish inhabitants replacing them with a German populace from the east (from Rumania, Wolhynia, etc.). After World War II, these Germans were in turn expelled but only part of the previous Polish population returned to the area. All over the area, a good number of new settlers from the former Eastern Polish territory are now living.

Natural Resources

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10. The area is typical agricultural land with quite a good quality of soil on which large plantations of sugar beets are cultivated. The beets are sent for reprocessing to sugar plants in Gniezno, Kruszwica -east of the area and Janikowo--north of the area.

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11. The numerous lakes are a base for an intensively operated fishery. The central fishery point is Mogilno where fish smoking and cooling installations are established. The lakes are interlinked by streams and affluxes but of the non-navigable type. Regarding industry, most of the factories in this area are for the reprocessing of agricultural products.

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12. The forests of the area are under the control of the state forestry sub-district in Skorzecin (situated south, beyond the reach of the sketch). Peat is another natural resource exploited in this area in the vicinity of Trzemeszno and Mogilno which is used for local fuel consumption.

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Probably Oil Deposits

13. The entire western edge of the area adjoins the Inowroclaw salt deposit basin. According to assumptions, oil is also available in this basin. Consequently, research work for oil was started in this area before World War II but with only limited results. During World War II and after World War II, this research was continued near Trzemeszno. Here, in Huta Trzemeszynska--northwest of the town, and Swieta--southwest of the town indications of oil resources were discovered. Near the same places brown iron ore deposits were also found. This ore, containing only a very low percentage of metal, has not been exploited.

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Electricity Supply

14. Practically the entire area has been electrified and receives its electricity from

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the Bydgoszcz-Gniezno high tension net.

Military Installations

15. ☐ Military installations are almost fully lacking in the entire area, except for Gniezno itself and its suburban terrains. South of Gniezno, in the former municipal forest, and south of this forest, a military dump and exercise ground have been established.

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Communication

16. ☐ Only limited communication investments have been observed in the area. Besides some routine repairs on railway lines and highways only one new highway is now under construction, running south of Trzemeszno to Witkowo.

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